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## DOES THE STYLE OF THE *CIVIL WAR* JUSTIFY THE DOUBT AS TO ITS AUTHENTICITY?

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Ancient and modern critics unite in according Caesar high praise as a stylist. That Cicero's well-known dictum, as well as the references of Hirtius and Quintilian, bear rather upon the *Gallic* than the *Civil War* may be inferential, but modern scholars are agreed that Caesar's claim to pre-eminence in literary craftsmanship rests rather upon the *Gallic War*. Within the last century several German scholars have gone so far as to deny Caesar's authorship of the *Civil War*, either wholly or in part, basing this denial upon stylistic features of the work as compared with the *Gallic War*. Most of these critics, while recognizing the latter as a model of classical Latinity, find in the *Civil War* unusual words, expressions, and constructions that vary from the usage of the former work. In a comparative study of the two compositions, therefore, it is worth while to take these conclusions into account.

B. Mosner, in a dissertation, *Num Caesar Bellum Civile Scripserit* (Kulmbach, 1865), collects a number of words and phrases which justify, he thinks, the question as to the authenticity of the *Bellum Civile*.

Some of these are as follows: *Albente caelo* (i. 68. 1), *novissimum agmen carpere* (i. 78. 4), *seniores* (ii. 4. 3), *summe cupere* (iii. 15. 8), *alacritas naturaliter innata* (iii. 92. 4), *passis palmis* (iii. 98. 2).

Soon after this followed the treatise of Heidtman, "Haben wir ausreichenden Garantien für die Echtheit der dem C. Julius Cäsar zugeschriebenen drei Bücher de bello civile?" (Essen, 1867). Heidtman's contention is that the *Bellum Civile* is a mediocre work, and not to be assigned to the Golden Age of Latin literature at all.

R. Menge, in *De auctoribus Commentariorum de bello civile qui Caesaris nomine feruntur* (Weimar, 1873), was the first to employ a

specific method in proving his thesis. He rejects Book ii, chaps. 1-16, and expresses the conviction that Caesar incorporated the report of Trebonius without change into the *Bellum Civile*. His argument is based primarily upon matters pertaining to phraseology and syntax. I quote some of the words and phrases which he regards as suspicious, together with his comments.

(1) B.C. ii. 1. 3, *alluo*. Cf. B.G. vii. 69, *collis subbluebat*; and B.C. iii. 97, *Montem flumen subbluebat*.

(2) ii. 9. 5, *storiarum*. *Storiae* nusquam legitur nisi in hoc capite; vocabulum artis videtur.

(3) ii. 10. 3, *capreolus*. Non *lēgi* nisi in Vitruvio.

(4) i. 2, *adigere, quod adigit ad ostium Rhodani*. Haec conformatio verborum ita offendit ut Nipperdeius iure mendum putaverit.

(5) 3. 2, *imprudente atque inopinante Curione*. Haec verba nusquam apud Caesarem invenies composita.

Among objectionable constructions and offenses against good style, he refers to the use of the dative, in ii. 10. 7, "*ut aedificio jungatur*," and to the position of *in solo* in 10. 2, "Duae trabes *in solo* aequae longae distantes inter se pedes 1111 collocantur."

B. Dinter (*Quaestiones Caesarianae*, 1876) seeks to show that Book iii, chaps. 108-112, are by Hirtius, on the ground that the style resembles that of B.G. viii. Also Petersdorff (*Progr. Belgard*, 1879) and Venediger (*Jahrbücher für Klass. Phil.*, 1879) argue that Caesar in the *Gallic War* embodied literally the reports of his legates.

G. Landgraf, in *Untersuchungen zu Caesar und seinen Fortsetzern* (München, 1888), ascribes to Asinius Pollio Book iii, chaps. 104-112. A comparison of this portion of the *Civil War* with the letters of Pollio and the other fragments of his work reveals a striking similarity of language. For example, in the second half of chap. 112 he cites as *un-Caesarian* the following:

*In hoc tractu oppidi; habitandi causa* (Caesar sagt nur *incolere*): *sese traicere* (= se conferre): *insequentibus die bus*.

Among the peculiarities of Pollio's style is the archaistic tendency toward the use of double diminutives. Landgraf in this connection refers (iii. 104. 3) to *Naviculam parvulam* as especially significant (cf. B. Afr. 54. 1). He also mentions, among others, *Causula parvula* and *Navigiolum parvulum*; such combinations occur also in the *African War*, which he assigns to Pollio, and do not occur elsewhere in Caesar.

W. Ehrenfried, on the other hand, in a dissertation, *Qua ratione Caesar in Commentariis legatorum relationes adhibuerit* (Wurzburg, 1888), makes an exhaustive comparison of all the reports of legates in both the *Gallic* and the *Civil War*, and finds the language, idiom, and syntax in all these similar and characteristic of Caesar. Adopting Menge's method, he shows further that unusual expressions and constructions can be found also in almost any book of the *Gallic War*. I quote several examples cited by him:

*B.G.* iii. 9, *remiges ex provincia instituerat*. Nusquam invenies in Caesare.

iii. 82, *Cum primum per anni tempus*. Haec conformatio abhorret a Caesaris scribendi genere.

iii. 9, *Quod ad usum navium pertinet*. Caesar dixisset, *quae usui sunt*.

As a final result of his investigation, he finds in the *Gallic War* 677 examples of ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, of which 87 occur one or more times in the *Civil War*. The *Civil War*, on the other hand, contains 500 ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, 90 of which we meet with in the *Gallic War*. Of these he collects about 1,000 that occur only once in the ten books of the *Commentaries*. In those portions of the two works that could be viewed as the reports of legates he finds only 127 of these words. It is clear from this that the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα are scattered throughout all parts of the commentaries, since the reports of the legates constitute about one-fifth of the entire work of Caesar.

J. Zingerle, in *Wiener Studien*, XIV (1892), ascribes to Caesar the *Civil War* and chaps. 1-21 of the *Alexandrian War*. He criticizes the method of those scholars who deny Caesar's authorship of certain portions of the *Civil War* on the ground of the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα and supports Ehrenfried in the position that these occur in all parts of both commentaries. He gives a new direction to the discussion by emphasizing the colloquial element in Caesar's work.

In this he is followed by Richard Frese, who makes a searching examination of the first book of the *Gallic War* to show that Caesar in the carefully worked out portions of his *Commentaries* did not avoid words, phrases, and constructions of the common speech. Then he applies this test to the *Civil War*, and maintains that the much-discussed peculiarities of style in the latter are due to the larger intrusion of the popular speech in a more rapidly written

work. He goes on to show further that the departures from the so-called classic usage can be justified by reference to other authors, especially Cicero.

The following citations from Frese's works will serve to show his method:

*B.G.* i. 3. 6.: *perfacile factu esse illis probat conata perficere*. Hier ist auf die entschieden volkstümliche Breite des Ausdruckes zu achten: *perfacile factu —perficere*. "Factu" ist das einzige Supinum auf "u" bei Caesar, und scheint bei *facile* völlig pleonastisch zu stehen: ebenso nur noch vii. 64. 2. *perfacile esse factu* (iv 30, 2, *optimum factu esse duxerunt*) nicht in *B.C.* i. 18. 6 *largiter posse*, durchaus der Umgangsprache entlehnt—*multum posse*.

i. 34. 2: *si quid ipsi a Caesare opus esset, sese ad eum venturum fuisse: si quid ille se velit, illum ad se venire oportere. Velle aliquem aliquid* sich sonst nicht in der Klassischen Prosa, ist der Umgangsprache entlehnt. Cf. *Ter. Phorm.* 151, *numquid aliud me vis?* und *Eun.* 363, *numquid me aliud?*

These and numerous other examples furnish support for the unusual constructions in the *Civil War*.

The use of the dative in *ut aedificio jungatur* is justified by reference to a similar use in Cicero (cf. *Acad.* ii. 139, . . . . *virtus . . . . nominem . . . . jungit deo*) and also *insequentibus diebus*, on the ground that the expression was coming into use about the time that Caesar wrote his *Civil War* (cf. *Hirtius* viii. 48. 10: *Asinius Pollio Charis; Livy* iii. 2. 1 and iv. 12. 1: *C.I.L.*, I, 1, F, 710).

Again, among the new uses of the dative which Caesar allowed himself in the *Civil War* is the so-called "geographical dative," *B.C.* iii. 80: "Caesar Gomphos pervenit, quod est oppidum primum Thessaliae venientibus ab Epiro." But even this Frese brings into connection with the syntactical usage of the *Gallic War*, pointing out in support of it an example from vii. 84: "multum ad terrendos nostros valet clamor qui post tergum *pugnantibus* existit."

He cites also an example from Varro (*De I. I.* v. 47), "sacrae viae pars, quae est a foro eunti primore clivo."

A careful re-reading of the *Gallic War* and the *Civil War* in the light of the dissertations referred to above convinces me that the attacks upon the authenticity of the latter place undue emphasis upon the difference between the two works in regard to vocabulary and syntax.

In regard to word-usage, it is obviously fair to subject the *Civil War* to crucial examination. Caesar himself, in his *Analogia*, laid down as the basis of elegance the *delectus verborum*. Quintilian recognizes also his choice of words as constituting Caesar's peculiar merit as a stylist: "exornat haec omnia mira sermonis, cuius propie studiosus fuit, elegantia" (x. i. 114). Modern scholars have not challenged this view (cf. Wölfflin, "Elegantiae Caesaris," *Archiv. für Lat. Lex. u. Gram.*, VIII, 142).

Granted, then, that Caesar's claim to elegance of style rests in large measure upon his choice of words, still the list of so-called unusual expressions seems too small to admit of serious attack even upon the *elegance* of the *Civil War*, to say nothing of its *authenticity*. A large proportion of the words objected to by Menge and others are technical, and are not used or avoided with reference to stylistic effect (see especially Book ii, chaps. 9 and 10). Others of those condemned were used probably with literary intention. Frese justifies the combination *navicula parvula* (iii. 104. 3), criticized by Dinter and Landgraf, in these words:

Ich glaube diese an sich vulgäre ausdrucksweise hier durchaus berechtigt und beabsichtigt ist. Caesar spielt aufs cognomen illustre des Pompeius an. . . . Der grosse Pompeius auf einen Fishernachen ermodert! Die einstige strahlende Macht und Herrlichkeit und sein elender Tod bilden einen tragischen Kontrast und auf diesen hat Caesar mit den beiden Diminutiven hinweisen wollen.<sup>1</sup>

Frese shows further that the jurist, Sulpicius Rufus, in his carefully composed letter of condolence to Cicero (*Ep.* iv. 5. 4) used diminutives: in "unius mulierculae animula si iactura facta est tanto opere commoveris?" Again, in regard to *passis palmis* (iii. 98. 2), Frese says: "die ungewöhnliche Situation hat das ungewöhnliche Wort veranlasset. Caesar selbst steht wie ein Gott da, die Besiegten liegen vor ihm in Staube mit erhobenen Händen wie Betende."

*Albente caelo*, objected to by Mosner and explained by Kraner-Hofman as a poetic expression (cf. Virgil *Aen.* iv. 586) is found in

<sup>1</sup> "I believe this expression, though vulgar in itself, is here justifiable and intentional. Caesar is playing upon the illustrious cognomen of Pompey. The great Pompey murdered in a fisherman's boat! The brilliance of his former might and glory and the misery of his death form a tragic contrast, and Caesar through the use of the two diminutives calls attention to this."

Quintilian viii. 3. 35, and also in *Bellum Afr.* 11. 80, and Frese holds that Caesar intended to use the expression to indicate an earlier hour than *prima luce*—daybreak as opposed to sunrise.

Making due allowance, therefore, for differences growing out of the nature of the subject-matter, and for mistakes of copyists, the list, I think, would appear meager.

Everywhere in the *Civil War*, even in contested portions, the general linguistic quality seems to me distinctly that of Caesar. Taking, for example, Book ii, chap. 10, one of the chapters containing the largest proportion of the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, and comparing it with *B.C.* iv. 17 and *B.C.* vii. 23, we note common words occurring in all three as follows: “instituerunt, coniungunt, defiguntur, distabat, iniiciunt, fastigati, subiectis, inmissi, religant” (*illigata* in iv. 17), “contineant, collocant, haec forma” (vii. 23: *hac forma*). The two sentences given below illustrate the point as a mere list cannot do:

*B.G.* vii. 23: *Trabes directae perpetuae in longitudinen paribus intervallis distantes inter se binos pedes in solo collocantur.* Cf. *B.C.* ii. 10: *Duae primum trabes in solo aequae longae, distantes inter se pedes IV collocantur inque eis columellae pedum in altitudinem V. defiguntur.*

In this chapter also we find characteristic alliteration and pleonasm. In the sentence (11 ff. Moberly) beginning: *Ita fastigate atque*, note alliteration with letter *c*, *capreolis collocatae . . . conteguntur*. Also ll. 28 and 29, *Coria . . . centonibus conteguntur*.

The pleonastic repetition of the antecedent in the relative clause, *cuius musculi haec erat forma* (l. 15), seems to me significant in view of Frese's investigation. He says: “Die Wiederholung des Beziehungswortes im Relativsatz kommt in *B.G.* sehr häufig vor, interessant ist aber dass diese schwerfällige Ausdrucksweise allmählich seltener wird.”<sup>1</sup> In *B.G.* it occurs 8 times in Book i, in the remaining six 11 times. In *B.C.* it occurs in all only 4 times, one of these occurrences being in a suspected passage.

Among the favorite words and expressions met with in both the *Gallic War* and the *Civil War*, a few may be noted as follows: *certiorem facere*; *accedit . . . quod*; *pugnare acriter*; *coepisse* and

<sup>1</sup> The repetition of the relative pronoun occurs very often in the *Gallic War*, but, interesting to note, this heavy combination becomes rarer and rarer.

*incipere* (with inf. 66 times); *instituere* (with inf. 24 times); *minus commode*, *imprimis*; ablatives of the fourth declension, *iussu*, *iniussu*, *ictu*, *auctu*, etc.; phrases, *uno tempore*, *ut tum accidit*, *non ita magno*, *non ita multo*, etc.

As to syntax proper, while the irregularities do not justify the attacks on the authenticity of the *Civil War*, they are sufficient to indicate somewhat greater carelessness in composition, and the larger intrusion of the *Sermo Cotidianus*.

Aside from word and syntactical usage, other characteristic indications of Caesar's style to be found in the *Civil War* are:

1. Alliteration: Cf. *B.C.* i. 13: "Caesari consecuti milites consistere coegerunt", and *B.G.* iv. 27: "Convenire et se civitatesque suas Caesari commendare coeperunt"; *B.C.* ii. 38: "Credens consilium commutat et proelio rem committere constituit"; *B.G.* i. 23: "Confident, commutato consilio atque itinere converse . . . coeperunt."

Numerous others might be cited; alliteration with the letter *c* is chosen here because it is regarded as especially Caesarian.

2. Anaphora: Cf. *B.C.* i. 22 with *B.G.* i. 14.

*B.C.* i. 21 (*quid . . . quid . . . quid*):

Tanta erat summae rerum expectatio, ut alius in aliam partem mente atque animo traheretur, *quid* ipsis Corfiniensibus, *quid* Domitio, *quid* Lentulo, *quid* reliquis accideret, qui quosque eventus exciperent.

*B.G.* i. 14 (*quod . . . quod . . . quod*):

Quod si veteris contumeliae oblivisci vellet, num etiam recentium iniuriarum, quod eo invito iter per provinciam per vim temptassent, *quod* Aeduos, *quod* Ambarros, *quod* Allobrogas vexassent, memoriam deponere posse? *Quod* sua victoria tam insolenter gloriarentur, *quodque* tam diu se impune iniurias tulisse admirarentur, eodem pertinere.

Cf. also *B.C.* i. 22 and *B.G.* iv. 19.

3. Position of *ut* after the first or second word: Cf. *B.C.* iii. 79: *et suis ut esset*, and *B.G.* i. 25: *Multo ut praeoptarent*.

4. Sentence structure: Caesar is fond of beginning a period with an ablative absolute, followed by several subordinate clauses, and ending it with the perfect participle of a deponent verb. Cf. *B.C.* i. 21 and *B.G.* iv. 9.

a) *B.C. i. 21*:

*Quibus rebus cognitis* Caesar *etsi* magni interesse arbitrabatur quam primum oppido potiri cohortesque ad se in castra traducere, *ne* qua aut largitionibus aut animi confirmatione aut falsis numtiis commutatio fieret voluntatis, *quod* saepe in bello parvis momentis magni casus intercederent, *tamen veritus*, *ne* militum introitu et nocturni temporis licentia oppidum diriperetur, eos, qui venerant, collaudat atque in oppidum dimittit, portas murosque asservari *jubet*.

b) *B.G. iv. 19*:

Quod ubi Caesar comperit, *omnibus eis rebus confectis*, *quarum* rerum causa traducere exercitum constituerat, *ut* Germanis metum iniceret, *ut* Sugambros ulcisceretur, *ut* Ubios obsidione liberaret, diebus omnino XVIII trans Rhenum consumptis, satis et ad laudem et ad utilitatem profectum *arbitratus*, se in Galliam recepit pontem *rescidit*.

In these two passages note further the balancing of phrases, the use of verbs of the same mood and tense, and the anaphora.

So far as the differences of style in the two commentaries can be reduced to general terms, the *Civil War* presents less evenness and variety of structure, less care for balanced effects, the rarer use of long periods, and, on the whole, more inequality of workmanship, some parts showing the lack of careful revision, while others are composed in Caesar's best manner. In the first and third books, for example, along with the vivid narration of events around Ilerda and the description of Petreius' despair, the brilliant account of the siege of Saloniae and the battle of Pharsalus, we find chapters like 15 and 18 in Book i, and 66 and 68 in Book iii, in which facts seem to be jotted down in notebook form. In the second book, which is generally admitted to be inferior on the whole to the first and third, we find in the speech of Curio a masterpiece of eloquence.

As examples of the more careless sentence structure we note in *B.C. i. 15* the following: "Milites imperat; mittunt; Interea legio duodecima Caesarem consequitur. Cum his duabus Asculum Picenum proficiscitur." It had been remarked that the second legion here referred to was mentioned eight chapters back, in i. 7.

Again in chap. 18: "Lucretius et Attius de muro deiecerunt . . . Caesar eos cohortes cum exercitu suo coniunxit Attiumque incolumen dimisit. Caesar primis diebus castra magnis operibus munire instituit."

In passages like these it seems that Caesar does not avoid the periodic structure on literary grounds. In the first six chapters of Book i, on the other hand, his abandonment of the periodic structure is in the highest degree effective. Through the succession of short sentences here are suggested the rapidity with which the events leading up to the war followed each other, the excited activities of Caesar's opponents, and his own scorn at the whole status of affairs summed up in the sentence which closes the passage, *omnia divina humanaque jura permiscetur*.

As further illustration of the greater deliberation in composition or revision of the earlier commentary it is interesting to compare *B.C.* ii. 9 with *B.G.* iv. 17. In these two chapters, dealing with subject-matter of much the same character (the first, the construction of a tower; the second, the construction of a bridge), appear significant differences.

In *B.C.* ii. 9 note the more carelessly constructed period, the monotonous repetition of the *ubi* clause throughout the chapter (6 times), and the absence of rhythm and careful balancing of phrases as compared with *B.G.* iv. 17.

The unfinished style of the *Civil War* is indicated further in the use of pronouns. The relative construction as a means of connecting sentences appears considerably more often in the *Civil* than in the *Gallic War*. In *B.C.* it occurs, according to Frese, 190 times within 123 pages of Teubner text; in *B.G.* not quite 190 times within 168 pages (7:5). This shows that Caesar did not exercise here the care in varying constructions and defining the exact nature of the relationship that is so evident in his more sustained work.

*Quidam* is used in *B.G.* 16 times, in *B.C.* 31 times. Note especially in iii. 66 twice the expression *quibusdam de causis*. In the passage iii. 65. 2-67 some form of *quidam* occurs 6 times. This suggests that the author here did not wish to take the time to go into an exact and detailed account of events. Among examples of the careless use of the demonstrative pronoun note especially ii. 22. 2 and 3: "*L. L. Domitius . . . navibus tribus comparatis . . . profectus est. Hunc conspicatae naves, quae missa Bruti consuetudine cotidiana ad portum excubabant, sublati ancoris sequi coeperunt. Ex his unum ipsius navigium contendit et fugere perseveravit.*"

In the *Civil War* the narrative throughout suggests more or less haste, even mental disturbance, and concentration upon a single point of view—one that concerns primarily the writer himself. In the *Gallic War* we feel a singular absence of the personal tone. Here Caesar deals with facts stated with clearness, directness, and every appearance of impartiality, and upon these he builds, when occasion requires, irresistibly clear-cut arguments, which appeal to the reason rather than to the imagination of the reader. His style lacks the ornament and color and what we might call the human-heartedness of Livy's, for example. It was not from Caesar that our English Renaissance writers, Peele, Lyly, Surrey, learned the *aureate* effects, to use a word of which they were so fond, but from Livy, Cicero, Seneca, and other Latin writers of distinctly rhetorical quality.

At the same time, underneath the cool objectivity of Caesar's style is the suggestion of range and power, and the exhilarating note of satisfaction in the review of arduous undertakings carried to a successful issue.

The pleasure that he betrays in working up minor incidents into dramatic episodes, the care that he bestows in describing the construction of a bridge, his keen interest in places and peoples, all this deliberate and lucid descriptiveness on the part of an author who seems in a sense quite aloof from it all, reveals a calmness and buoyancy of mind that we miss in the *Civil War*.

Apart from the technical differences, one finds, I think, in the *Civil War* a distinctly more partisan attitude. In *B.C. i. 32* Caesar makes reference to the tedious harangues of Cato, using a belittling ablative absolute: "*Latum ab X tribunis plebis contra dicentibus inimicis, Catone vero acerrime repugnante et pristina consuetudine dicendi mora dies extrahente.*"

Again in *B.C. iii. 31* the allusion to Scipio is ironical: "His temporibus Scipio detrimentis quibusdam circa mentem Amanum acceptis imperatorem se appellaverat."

In chaps. 3 and 4 he ridicules Pompey and his army, playing upon the word *magnus* (*magnam classem* being used four times within eight lines), and ironically applying to petty chiefs and princes the terms *reges*, *dynasti*, *tetrarchi*. In the same vein is the

long, detailed account of Pompey's forces, and the emphasis upon their *non-Roman* character, drawn, as Caesar pointedly relates, from any- and everywhere.

In the *Gallic War*, in the discussion of individuals, even of arch-enemies, like Vercingetorix, Caesar leaves room for the operation of the reader's sympathies. On the other hand, in the *Civil War*, as we have seen, he reveals to a far greater extent his own mood in the characterization of his enemies. This is felt in his *speeches* especially. There is the same cogency in dealing with facts, but there is, further, more effort at psychological appeal, and in some ways more oratory than in those of the *Gallic War*. In the *Civil War* Caesar makes discriminating use of *oratio obliqua* in quoting his own speeches. In i. 7, for example, there is a frankly personal appeal to his soldiers. The primitive human impulse to resent injustice and strike back at one's enemies speaks through this appeal; and the *oratio obliqua*, bringing the ego less vividly before the reader, is less offensive, and less likely to forfeit sympathy. In connection with the revelation of himself, his detailed report of the *speech of Curio* in the *oratio recta* deserves mention for the light it throws on Caesar's loyalty to his friends. This passage recalls the record of the standard-bearer, whose chief thought while dying was that the eagle should be restored to Caesar undishonored, and also that of Crastinus, who said before going into battle: "Faciam, imperator, ut aut vivo mihi aut mortuo gratias agas." In all these records we have Caesar's tribute to those who had died fighting for his cause; and they illustrate the peculiar psychological quality of the *Civil War* as compared with the other commentary.

In two works whose immediate intention was so different, it was inevitable that there should be a difference of style. In one we have a close and progressive narrative and judicial calm; and though the events are hurried and stirring enough in themselves, they are set down in moments of deliberation and reflectiveness. In the *Civil War* the press of circumstances, the necessity for action and decision in altogether different environment, the intensity of feeling aroused in Caesar in this struggle for something more than life—all this, with the actual hurry that attended the setting down of this material, robs Caesar's style of some of the peculiar and even elegance of the *Gallic War*.